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HONORED — Pastor Jim Jones of Peoples Temple receiving "Humanitarian of the Year" award. Some of the honored guests at the ceremony were, from left: Dr. and Mrs. John Moore. Methodist district superintendent in California, Pastor Jones, Mr and Mrs. Gerald McHarg, regional pastor of 200 Christian churches, Mrs. Lorenza Cole, publisher S. Alexander, Dr. Yvonne Meo, and Dr. Charles Hall, a prominent dentist.

Vast humanitarian ministry

Temple expands outreach program

Peoples Temple Christian Church, of the nationwide Disciples of Christ denomination of two million members, expanded its extensive outreach program this past year to include a large number of wide-ranging groups, organizations, and causes, all concerned with improving the welfare of the citizenry.

Among those who received financial and other kinds of support from the Temple were the Fresno Bee newsmen arrested for refusing to reveal their confidential sources of information; a medical clinic (Tel-Hi) serving the Bay Area, which otherwise would probably would have had to close its doors; the American Cancer Society; the Mendocino County Heart Association and other medical research and testing programs, such as Sickle-Cell Anemia; KQED and other educational broadcasting stations; Big-Brothers of America; anti-hunger groups such as Bread for the World; Indian relief; city schools; hospital development; various church programs operated under Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish sponsorship; the purchase of at least 1,700 concert tickets to benefit the Center for Self-Determination; and many others, the most recent being a donation of $500 to the family of a slain highway patrolman in the Fresno area, for which the Temple was highly praised last week in an article in the San Francisco Chronicle.

The above support was in addition to the Temple's own vast humanitarian ministry, pastored by Rev. Jim Jones of Redwood Valley, which is widely recognized for providing its many thousands of members, and others who are non-members with care homes and convalescent centers; a children's ranch on 40 acres; apartment units for senior citizens; free legal services and health care, including effective drug rehabilitation; bus transportation; college education for young people; food, clothing, and other round-the-clock emergency services; and large refuge shelters for all kinds of animals.

Pastor Jones' ministry is concerned not only with helping to meet the needs of those who are disadvantaged, but also with identifying the causes of those needs so that they might be eradicated from our society.

It is because of this consistent and genuine effort that Pastor Jones received the highly coveted award of the Los Angeles Herald as the "Humanitarian of the Year." In a ceremony he was presented with a beautiful painting from internationally known artist Dr. Yvonne Meo, and a trophy.

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Thomas Fleming's Weekly Report

Jim Jones, an independent leader or pastor of a church within the Christian religion, is not well liked by some elements of the Christian religion. We use the term "independent," because Jim Jones is outside the confines of the structured or denominational groups, such as Catholic, Methodist, Baptist, Lutheran, Anglican, or any other that tells its followers that its particular method is the best method by which all those interested in the hereafter may reach the goal of entering into the kingdom of the hereafter.

Jones perhaps looked in his early days, and what he saw caused him the same emotion of disgust that kept Henry L. Mencken all through his lifetime as one of the great agnostics. Jones is the founder of Peoples Temple, a religious organization that follows the precepts of Jesus Christ more diligently than does any other group that professes to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Christ, during his short career among men, preached a philosophy of loving thy brother regardless of color or speech. At least, that is the way in which this writer views Christ and the faith that is named after him--Christianity.

Jones, in his endeavor to make life confortable for all mankind, struck a note of genuine empathy for those persons who had been generally ignored by other prophets or messiahs who claimed direct contact with Christ, when such prophets or messiahs organized their own sects.

Blacks and the other pariah groups mostly were regarded as outcasts, not because they were not also of humankind, but because the other messiahs and prophets were more interested in capturing adherents among the more affluent people of the world who would be in a position to donate generous sums of money. These donations would cram the coffers of the prophets and messiahs who organized so-called Christian sects.

The growth of Peoples Temple has been phenomenal, simply because Jones and his immediate followers have got across to those who comprise the pariah class that there is a group that is genuinely interested in seeing people--all people--become brothers under one common Father--Jehovah.

Jones's success has been a source of trouble for him and for those persons who have become his detractors. Jones first became the target of a so-called holy man, who supplemented his meager income as a preacher by contributing scurrilous writings to a number of newspapers, including the San Francisco Examiner, discussing Jones's methods of defining Christianity for those persons who were looking for some form of spiritual surcease from the vexing problems of everyday living.

But attacks upon the Jones program of the brotherhood of mankind have not decreased one iota. Attacks upon the brotherhood program have been intensified to the same extent that earlier attacks were made against Jesus Christ in his day.

Then there are some members of the boobocrat group here in the United States who find it most unpleasant to behold peoples of different colors and speech worshiping in one and the same temple without any hindrance stemming from those superficial differences. The Jones organization has shown some concern about the vitriolic nature of the criticism that has been directed against it by faceless people who never show themselves. Most of the diatribes have been issued in the form of hate mail, which should be ignored, but one never knows just how far the writers of threatening letters are prepared to go to carry out their written threats.

I cannot, because of space limitations, go into all of the social welfare programs that Peoples Temple has become involved in since its inception, but they are considerable. There has not been one instance where Peoples Temple has ever euchred anyone out of his money so the Temple might conduct its munificent welfare works. These programs are such a virbrant portion of the Christlike religious undertaking that Jim Jones and his followers offer to the polyglot people of this community who call themselves, and who are, American citizens.